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Senate Panel Sets Aug. 31 Deadline for Options on Bugged Moscow Chancery

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted yesterday to give the Reagan administration until Aug. 31 to devise options on what can be done to salvage the new U.S. Embassy chancery in Moscow, whose security has been compromised by Soviet listening devices.

The panel also gave the administration the same deadline to present an assessment of security risks involved in allowing the Soviets to continue occupying their new embassy complex on Mount Alto off Wisconsin Avenue NW.

The actions serve to relieve steadily mounting congressional pressure on the administration to expel the Soviets from Mount Alto, demolish the U.S. chancery in Moscow and abrogate U.S.-Soviet agreements establishing locations and terms for construction of the two embassy complexes.

A State Department representative at yesterday's markup of the department authorization bill expressed relief at the committee's adoption of compromise language delaying action on the two embassies.

The compromise was worked out between committee Chairman Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) in an attempt to give the administration time to complete various studies of extensive Soviet bugging of the U.S. chancery.

The department official said the Aug. 31 deadline might be difficult to meet because the studies are not expected to be completed much before then.

The Pell-Lugar amendment also orders the secretary of state to consult with the director of central intelligence in providing Congress an assessment by Aug. 31 of whether U.S. security interests would be better served by canceling the embassy agreements.

They are also to advise on what measures

can be taken to counter Soviet intelligence collection from Mount Alto, if the accords are preserved.

The committee rejected, 16 to 3, an amendment offered by Jesse Helms (N.C.), ranking minority member, that would have barred use of any State Department funds earmarked for chancery completion for purposes other than its immediate demolition.

Another Helms amendment, defeated 12 to 4, would have directed the secretary of state to present a claim to the Soviets for payment of the additional cost to the United States of repairing damage resulting from Soviet bugging. Helms indicated that he

intends to take both amendments to the Senate floor.

The latest indication of pressure on the administration was seen Tuesday when Daniel A. Mica (D-Fla.), chairman of the House subcommittee on international operations controlling the State Department's budget, introduced a bill that would cancel the 1969 and 1972 embassy agreements and expel the Soviets from Mount Alto.

Mica would allow the president to waive abrogation of the accords if he determines it is "vital" to national security not to withdraw and steps are taken to ensure security of the new U.S. chancery in Moscow.